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TITLE: the Program of Reforming the Public Health System of Ukraine and the Perspectives for Its Relization

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The Program of Reforming the Public Health System of Ukraine and the Perspectives for Its Realization

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An analysis of the public health conditions in Ukraine reveals an unsatisfactory medico-demographic situation which is characterized by a low birth rate, a relatively high mortality rate, a negative population growth, a reduction of the expected human life-span as well as dissemination of a large group of diseases.

Obviously, the existing public health system in Ukraine does not meet the requirements of an up-to-date efficient public health system. There have been extensive developments, but experience indicates that there are many economic and organizational problems, as well as strategic flaws in the development of the public health system. I must repeat that the existing system of public health does not meet today's requirements and needs to be improved.

The key problems of public health are:

- 1) the insufficiency, inconsistency and inefficiency of the measures directed to preserve and strengthen public health;
- 2) an irrational organization of medical care, a disproportion in the development of out-patient and in-patient specialized care, unsatisfactory communication and the imperfections in the sequence of care.
- 3) imperfect and poor legal support of the public health system.
- 4) insufficient funding of the branch, resulting in low incomes of medical personnel, lack of means for accessible, high-quality and effective medical care.
- 5) the need to improve training and postgraduate training of medical personnel, to raise the skill levels and to improve working conditions, as well as its quality and effectiveness.
- 6) deficiency of state-of-the-art medical technologies, poor medical supply and material support of the public health facilities.
- 7) a low level of information support and management of the public health system.

Up-to-date requirements for an effective public health system determine **the main strategic tasks of Ukraine's policy** in the field of public health:

- to preserve and strengthen public health;
- to guarantee availability and quality of medical care;
- to contain the cost of medical care;
- to improve the medico-demographic situation: (birth rate, mortality rate, life-span);

- to protect effectively the natural environment and to minimize the consequences of Chernobyl nuclear catastrophe;
- to increase the level of public health education and awareness, and to promote healthy lifestyle;
- to improve the work of all the branches of the public health system, to extend the rights and functions of the health service and its organization;
- to improve the organization of medical care (with priority for development of primary medical care), to regulate the network and structure of the medical facilities;
- to provide a rational utilization of personnel, financial and material resources;
- to improve the mechanisms of financing medical facilities and the remuneration of labor of medical personnel;
- to provide legal support of the public health system and its reforming.

An effective public health system does not depend on itself. On basis of analyses to identify the main problems and tasks, carried out by leading Ukrainian experts on public health, a program has been developed to reform the public health system. **The legal base of the program** is: the Constitution of Ukraine and “The Fundamentals of Ukrainian Law of Health Protection” which proclaim and guarantee every individual's right to health protection. The key issue in the reform of the system is the reconstruction of the financing system, the mobilization of the necessary finances at the expense of the state budget, as well as extra budget resources.

It seems to us that stress should be placed on mixed financing and the involvement of previously unused non-traditional sources such as health insurance, charity funds of various kinds, fines and penalties for environmental pollution etc. The proposed financing mechanisms will make the budget limitations less rigid and can allow a more flexible response to the increased public health needs of the community. The medical insurance system is becoming an important and new element of financing.

Thus, the main tasks of Public Health system reform are:

- to develop a state policy and strategy in the field of public health;
- to improve public health management forms and methods on every level;
- to identify the priorities of medical care and to determine the range of medical care for Ukrainian citizens guaranteed by the state;
- to regulate the network, structure and functions of medical facilities;
- to restructure the system to eliminate the current disproportion in the development of various kinds of medical care;
- to develop capacity and quality standards for medical technologies compatible with every kind of medical care;
- to implement an effective system of multi-channel financing of Public Health based on mandatory social medical insurance;

- to take measures for decentralization of medical facilities by privatization; to promote individual medical practice; to create competitive conditions among medical facilities and physicians which will help to make medical care accessible and high-quality;
- to develop a rational system of accreditation of medical facilities and licensing of physicians which will promote various types of medical care;
- to develop and implement state-of-the-art medical technologies;
- to improve the mechanisms of financial compensation of medical personnel according to their qualification, work content, quality and results;
- to create a system of information support based on a wide use of computer equipment, unification of informational methods and means, to develop an information network and to improve the medical statistical service;
- to develop methods of legal assistance of patients and medical personnel, and legal support for the system's reforming and functioning.

The Program realization stages and its preliminary terms have been determined as follows: **the first stage** – preparatory; **the second** – the Program formation; **the third** – the experimental stage; **the fourth** – the period of the development of normative and legal documents and organizational arrangements; **the fifth** – the implementation period of indicated above developments.

The Program must provide the performance of the system's main tasks which will improve the system and make its activity more effective and will finally make the improvement of public health possible.

The execution phase will allow to set up rational ways of public health reform, its restructuring, improvement of the medical care organization, its resource provision, the promotion of healthy lifestyle, and the preservation and strengthening of public health. In the future, legal support and information support of the public health system and its management on every level needs to be improved.

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